



## 8 Opportunities and Issues

Chula Vista's existing bikeway system has some unique features, especially the dichotomy of bikeway facility types between the eastern and western sections of the City. The eastern portion of the system is heavily weighted toward Class 2 facilities to take advantage of the arterial roadways, while the western portion is dominated by Class

3 routes on the narrower grid street system. The prevalence of specific bikeway facility types has been driven by street patterns and localized topography, and because of these factors, any additional facilities are likely to match the existing ones in the respective areas of the City.



## 8.1 Future Street Additions and Extensions with Bicycle Facilities

The City of Chula Vista's policy of including Class 2 bikeway facilities on arterial streets had created a comprehensive network on such streets in the rapidly developing eastern portion of the City. Virtually all programmed arterials within the City of Chula Vista are planned to include Class 2 bikeway facilities. When this road and bikeway facility development is complete as planned, it will provide a comprehensive network of Class 2 routes. Many experienced cyclists prefer on-street facilities and they should find that the finished on-street system will provide ample and adequate routes for transportation cycling.

## 8.2 Safety Issues

The study questionnaire's respondents' primary concerns were about road conditions, motorist behavior and high speed on- and off-ramps and merge lanes. Field experience also indicated that general safety priorities should include Class 2 striping, wherever feasible, of roadways that cross freeways. Other priorities should include increasing roadway maintenance, removing debris from bikeway facilities and repairing potholes.

### 8.2.1 Narrow Roadways and Bridges

Narrow roadways are not necessarily a safety issue for cyclists, but reduced width with high motor vehicle speeds or volumes can make a roadway less desirable as a bikeway facility. This is particularly true in the older western portion of Chula Vista, where the traditional grid street system and narrower rights-of-way are reflected in the typical street configuration. Questionnaire respondents also mentioned Broadway/National City Boulevard bridge as a particularly uncomfortable location, especially the combination of narrow curb lanes and high motor vehicle traffic volumes. It should be noted that this bridge is in National City.

### 8.2.2 High Posted Speed Limits

Like roadway width, high posted speed limits alone may not be a deterrent to designating a bikeway facility on a particular roadway. For example, many of the facilities in the eastern portion of Chula Vista are on roadways with posted speed limits of up to 50 m.p.h.. However, many less experienced cyclists will feel uncomfortable using these major roadways, even with striped Class 2 lanes.



*North end of Broadway*



*National City Boulevard bridge*

## 8.3 Connectivity Issues

A number of issues and opportunities affect cycling connectivity in Chula Vista. The issues are generally physical and the opportunities can provide ways to circumvent the physical obstacles.

### 8.3.1 Local Geomorphology

While western Chula Vista is relatively level, eastern Chula Vista lies on a series of east-west ridgelines separated by canyons. Especially in the north-south direction, some cyclists will find the some of these grades to be insurmountable and many will find them too strenuous for routine use.

### 8.3.2 Interstate Highways

The interstate highways running north-south through Chula Vista and the future alignment of SR-125 create some connectivity problems. Traversing the typical interchanges when crossing under or over the freeways can be a disagreeable experience as the cyclist is forced to deal with a frequent lack of bikeway facility striping and motor vehicles making lane changes onto multiple on- and off-ramps at speeds considerably higher than a cyclist's normal speed.

Interstate 805 between Palm Avenue and Auto Park Way is currently open to cyclists and future SR-125 will be as well.



*Interstate Highway 5*

### 8.3.3 Incomplete Roadways and Bikeways

#### Bayshore Bikeway

According to questionnaire respondents, the most desired incomplete bikeway component is the Bayshore Bikeway. The Class 1 segment between E Street and F Street is the last remaining segment in Chula Vista since the bikeway bridge over the Sweetwater River was completed in early 2004.



*Bayshore Bikeway at Main Street*

#### Sweetwater River Bikeway

The Sweetwater River Bikeway lies within the City of National City just across the Sweetwater River from Chula Vista. Completion of the Sweetwater River bikeway bridge now allows users to make the connection between the Sweetwater River Bikeway and the Bayshore Bikeway at that point. In addition, several questionnaire respondents mentioned the desire to see this bikeway extended eastward to the Sweetwater Summit Park near Sweetwater Reservoir, and even further east than that.



*Construction of Sweetwater River bikeway bridge (Completed in April 2004)*

### **Class 1 Paths or Trails within Utility Easements**

An existing utility easement currently runs in a northeast-southwest orientation across Chula Vista. A dirt maintenance road traverses much of the easement. There are some park lands within and adjacent to this easement, and the segment near Castle Park High School gets significant daily use as students use it to get to and from school. There is even a pedestrian-activated signalized crossing of Hilltop Drive which probably reflects the numbers of students who cross here. Some segments of the easement have grades that are too severe



*Existing utility easement road*

for Class 1 bikeway designation, but the retention of the dirt road as a trail is feasible. If so, it could link with the proposed greenbelt trail system.

### **8.3.4 Greenbelt Trail System**

The proposed greenbelt trail system will be developed within river and creek valleys around the southern and eastern periphery of Chula Vista and connect with existing and currently developing bikeways to the north and west to create a complete loop around the City. Significant sections may employ a decomposed granite surface suitable for most users, including most wide-tired bicycles. However, Caltrans does not permit an unpaved route to be designated as a Class 1 bikeway facility. This also precludes its eligibility for most typical bikeway funding, though it should be eligible for recreational trail funding. Even so, such a greenbelt system can expect to see considerable bicycle use because of its scenic nature, mild grades, lack of motor vehicles and level of connectivity.

## **8.4 Projected Bikeway Facility Demand**

Calculations compiled to fulfill standard Caltrans bikeway master plan requirements indicate there are approximately 4,085 commuting cyclists in Chula Vista. (See Caltrans Bicycle Transportation Account - Section 891.2 Compliance.) It is likely there are several times as many recreational cyclists who ride less often and less regularly than the commuters, but are numerous enough to make up the bulk of bikeway facility use in Chula Vista.

